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Symington should quit

One of the most amazing statements of the year is that by Sen. Stuart Symington (D-Mo.), to the effect that Central Intelligence Agency Director William E. Colby should resign, if he was responsible for the project of salvaging a sunken Russian nuclear-missile submarine.

We have grown accustomed to attacks by liberals on the effectiveness of our defense forces to safeguard the national security. It has been manifested in criticism of troop and fleet deployment, by chiseling away at defense appropriations, by attacks on new-weapons research and development and by a general opposition to anything which would strengthen America in a hostile world.

Still, a new low seems to have been reached in this incident. The potential existed for securing cyphers, battle plans and an evaluation of the comparative development of Communist technology, before columnist Jack Anderson violated national security considerations and let America's greatest potential enemy know what our enterprising intelligence forces were

onto. Symington's criticism was echoed by Senators Frank Church (D-Idaho) and Jacob K. Javits (R-N.Y.). We can imagine the glee in Moscow which greeted the utterances by Anderson, Symington, Church and Javits. Had they purposely set out to play into the hands of the Communists, they could not have done a better job.

The statement by Symington that congressional leaders should have been notified in advance was rendered meaningless when some responsible leaders — among them Senate Democratic Leader Mike Mansfield and Rep. George Mahon (D-Texas), chairman of the House Appropriations Committee — said they had been so briefed. The CIA, knowing that some congressional offices are like sieves when it comes to discretion, apparently knew who to notify, and who to bypass.

If a resignation is in order, it should be that of Symington. Directed ~~at Colby, or whoever in the CIA~~ who was primarily responsible for the submarine salvage project, should be commended.